

HARE KRISHNA MAHAMANTRA

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CHANT AND BE HAPPY

A question automatically arises what is to be chanted ?. Who has propagated this?. A very short answer is:- Hare Krishna mahamantra and the adviser to chant this is our beloved Srila A.C. Bhaktibedanta Swami Prabhupada, the founder Acarya of ISKCON.

The next question is why it is called Mahamantra?. The answer to this question is that if anyone chant the mahamantra.

"Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna

Krishna Hare Hare

Hare Rama Hare Rama

Rama Rama Hare Hare"

He would get the followings:-

(i) it would bring mental happiness certainly and within a short time. Srila Prabhupada and other great Vaisnavas described its power of curing all mental sufferings.

(ii) can give away all the types of mental and even physical illness.

(iii) can cure different types of physical illness.

(iv) can give you the scope for attaining healthy, mentally wealthy and wise.

(v) it is said that when you will chant the holy name of Lord Krishna, the Lord himself will come to you. He will shower his blessings on you. As such you will be happy automatically without any material cause.

(vi) this is called mahamantra because it superceeds and surpasses all types of mantras available in all Sanatan Scriptures. My beloved Gurudev H.H. Bhakticharu Swami Maharaj while once discussing in a session on Mahabharat, was asked by a lady that whether BrahmaGaitri is equal to or superior to Hare Krishna Mahamantra?.

My Gurudev answered : Well you see the answer is inherent in your question. You said Gaitri as a mantra and Hare Krishna as mahamantra. One is simply a mantra and the other is mahamantra. Now imagine/understand which one is superior?. He further said that in Mahamantra there is gaitri mantra and not vice versa. Thus mahamantra is certainly superior as well as to create/produce more beneficial effects on its chanter.

(vii) by chanting mahamantra one can eliminate all types of evils and thousands sins inherent in his heart.

(viii) Chanting Hare Krishna mahamantra will purify one's heart continuously and he will attain a high rank in the society by the grace of the Lord Krishna.

(ix) Even by hearing the chanting of the mahamantra from a bonafide/real devotee of the Lord one's heart and as well as his/her behaviour will be changed totally and he/she would be a holy person/real devotee of the Lord. Many examples are found in our holy scriptures. We mention here only two examples. One from Ramayana where Ratnakar dakait being instructed by Narod Muni chanted many year the holy name Rama and consequently he converted to a muni named Balmiki. He wrote the holy mahakavya Ramayana. Another example can be cited from Chaitannya Bhagvat. Here a prostitute named Laxmi Hira after hearing the mahamantra from Haridas Thakura only for three days became a pure devotee.

Thus chanting or hearing or both at the same time will surely change even the code of life of a fallen person.

(x) It has been stated by Krishna Das Kaviraj Goswami in Chaitanya Charitamrita- "Purve ami ramanam paiachi Siva haite tomara sanga labhe haila Krishna nama laita" (C.C Antya 256)

He further said:-

"Mukti hetuka Tare Rama nama Krishna nama paraka hana kare premdana"(C.C. Antya 257)

This means ram nama gives a person mukti from this material world. But Krishna nama gives him Krishna Prem - Dana which is rare to get.

(xi) A person meditate on the mahamantra minutely and loudly Lord himself will come to him and will dances. Example is Haridas Thakura. He chant the holy name so loudly that all human beings and other creatures such as trees, creepers, plants etc also benefited. Not only this the entire universe becomes cleaned from all sinful reactions just by observing Haridas dances. He occasionally danced in ecstacy or cried in lamentation while at other tunes he lay still in a state of unconsciousness due to chanting and dancing.

ROLE OF MAHAPRABHU FOR SPREADING THE MAHAMANTRA

In the Mangalacharana of Chaitanya Bhagbat Vrindaban Das Thakura stated:-

"ajanu-lambita-bhujankanakavadatau Sankirtana - Pitarau Kamalyata Krishna Visavam
bharau dvija- varau yugadharma palau Vande jagat priya - Karan Karuna Vatarau
(C.Bh.Adi1/1).

In the above verse it has been said that Sre Gaurahari and Sri Nityananda are the bestowers of the mahamantra, the spiritual master of the universe. And the fathers of the pure chanting of the holy names. They have preached the religious principles of for the age of Kali, in the form of serving Vishnu and the Vaisnavas through the process of Sankirtana which is the only means of deliverance for the people of this age. Everyone should follow the principles of such prayers by name - ruci, having a taste for chanting the holy name, jive - daya, showing compassion for other living entities and vaisnavas seva, serving the vaisnavas.

The words Sankirtana pitarau indicate that Sri Gaura - Nityananda are the inaugurators of the Sri Krishna Sankirtana movement. Srila Krishna Das Kaviraj Goswami has written in the Chaitanya Charitamrita (C.C Adi 3/76) as follows :-

Sankirtana - Pravartaka Sri - Krishna Chaitanya.

Sankirtana - yajne tanre bhaje, sei dhanya

This means "Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya is the initiator of Sankirtana [congregational chanting of the name of the Lord]. One who worships him through sankirtana is fortunate indeed."

By using the dvi - vacana form of the word Visvambhana, both Sri Gaura and Sri Nityananda are both Vishnu Tattava and since they have distributed love of God to the world through the chanting of the holy names. They are known as Visvambhara. They floods the world with the nectar of devotion and thus saves the mundane peoples.

Regarding Yuga dharma it can be said:- The process of self realisation for Satya - yuga is meditation ; for Treta - yuga in sacrifice ; Dvapara - yuga is Deity worships and for Kali - yuga is congregational chanting of the holy names of the Lord. As stated in the Srimad Bhagbatam (12/3/52) :

Krteyad dhyayato visnum tretayan yajatto makhain dvaparae paricaryayam kalan tad dharti kirtanat.

Moreover: whatever result was obtained in Satya - yuga by meditating on Vishnu, Tretay yuga by performing sacrifices, and in Dvapara - Yuga by serving the Lord's Lotus feet can be obtained by chanting the Hare Krishna Maha - mantra."

Else where in the Srimad Bhagbatam (12/3/51) it is stated:-

"Kaler dosa nidhe rajan asti hyek mahan gunah
Kirtanad eva Krsnasya mukta - sangah param Vrajat."

Here Sukdev Goswami said to King Parikshit: My dear King although Kali - Yuga is an ocean of faults, there is still one good quality about this age. Simply by chanting the Hare Krishna mahamantra one can become free from material bondage and be promoted to the transcendental Kingdom.

Srimad Bhagbatam(11/5/36) further states:-

Kalim sabhaj ayanty arya gunu jnah savabhaginah Yd apnotitad apnoti Kalau Sankirtya besavam.

The meaning is:- Whatever is achieved by meditation in Satya Yuga, by the performance of sacrifice in Treta Yuga and by the worship of Lord Krishna's Lotus feet in Dvapara Yuga is obtained in the age of Kali simply by glorifying the name of Lord Krishna."

The phrase "Yugadharma - palau" is described as follows :- According to the scriptures dealing with Karma - Kanda or fruitive activities, the religious principle of the age of Kali is chanting the name of the Lord. But as the maintainers of Yuga - Dharma the two most moghnamo Lords, Sri Gaura and Sri Nityananda have inaugurated the congregational chanting of the holy names of Krishna. The Srimad Bhagbatam (11/5/32 and 10/8/9) says :- "in the age of Kali intelligent persons perform congregational chanting to worship the incarnation of Godhead who constantly sings the names of Krishna. Although His complexion is not blackish, He is Krishna himself. He is accompanied by his associates, servants, weapons and confidential companions.

Regarding Karunavatara two merciful incarnations, Srila Rupa Goswami remarked in his drama Vidagdha - madhava as follows:-

"anarpita - carim cirat Karunaya vatirnah Kalau" - "He has appeared in the age of Kali by his causeless mercy to bestow what no incarnation even offered before." Srila Kaviraj Goswami has written in the Caitanya Caritamrta (Adi 5/207 - 208; 216) "who in this world but Nitinandya could show this mercy to such abominable persons (such as jagai - Madhai) as me? Because He is intoxicated by ecstatic love and is an incarnation of mercy. He does not distinguish between good and the bad. The mercy of Lord Nitanda showed me Sri Madana Mohana and gave me Sri Madana - Mohana as my Lord and master."

Mahaprabhu said:

"Prabhu bale - sarva Kalasatya Krishna nama sarva - sastre - Krishna bai na balaye ana" (C Bh Madhya 1/148)

Here the Lord said :- The holy names of Krishna are the eternal truth. All scriptures explain Krishna and nothing else.

One who honours the following confidential words of the Padma Purana will attain ecstatic love of God:-

"Satam ninda namnah paramam aparadham vitamte yatah khyatim yatam katham U sahate tad - vigarham"

(C. Bh. Madhya 13/393)

The English translation of the above verse:- "To blaspheme the great saintly persons who are preaching the glories of the Lord is very dangerous.

Even an animal can chant the holy name of the Lord in his/her own language. This has been seen when Mahaprabhu was going through Jharikhanda. Another example is a dog who follows Shivananda Sen(a close associate and devotee of Mahaprabhu, who was a minder of Gram Kanchrapara of Nadiya district, West Bengal, India and any how reached to Mahaprabhu in pure (Nilachal). There he was given food by Mahaprabhu ordered him to chant Harinam. The dog did so and after eating Mahaprasad died and went to Baikuntha.

In the Gaudiya Vaisnava society Mahaprabhu seems to be the first preacher of Mahamantra. Mahaprabhu at his Youth age visited the then East Bengal(now Bangladesh). At that time a Brahmin named Tapan Misra asked him about sydha - sadhan Tatta. Mahaprabhu advised him as follows:-

"suna misra, kali - yuge nahi tapayajna yei Jane bhaje Krishna tanra mahabhagy" (C. Bh. Adi 14/141)

The English translation is: Please listen, dear Mishra, there is no other say austerity or sacrifice prescribed in this age of Kali. One who worships Krishna is most fortunate.

He further said-

ata eva grhe tumi Krishna - bhaja giya kuti nati parihari ekanta haiya" (C. Bh Adi 14/142)

English translation of the above verse : Therefore go back to your house and worship Krishna with full attentive. Here the prefix Kutinati refers to prohibited activities and the syllable na has the same. The cheating propensity is also known as Kutinati purihari. If one gives up the improper desire to cultivate sadhanas that bestow the four deceitful objects of dharma, artha, Kama and moksa as the goal of life and takes undeviating shelter of the holy names of Krishna, then he can awaken love for Krishna. Sense enjoyers, fruitive workers, yogis, and mental speculators do not endeavour to obtain love for Krishna. They do not get eternal benefit. Mahaprabhu further advised the Tapan Misra as follows:-

"Sadhya - sadhana - tattava ye Kichu sakale hari - nama sankirtane milibe sakala." (C. Bh Adi 14/143)

This means : By congregational chanting the holy names you will achieve everything including the goal of life and the means for attaining it.

Love of Krishna is called sadya and congregational chanting the names of Krishna is the Sadhana. Any question that may arise in this regard can be resolved only by chanting the names of Krishna. The uselessness of the insignificant desires of the sense enjoyers, fruitive workers and mental speculators is easily realised by persons who are under the shelter of the holy names through the process of sankirtana:-

"harernama harernama harer namaiva Kevalam Kalau - nasty eva nasty eva nasty eva gati anyatha" (C. Bh. Adi 4/144)

This means in this age of Kali - Yuga i.e. the age of quarrel and hypocrasy the only means of deliverance is chanting the name of the Lord. There is no other way, there is no way, there is no other way.

"Hare Krishna Hare Krishna

Krishna Krishna Hare Hare

Hare Rama Hare Rama

Rama Rama Hare Hare". - ei sloka nama balilaya maha - mantra sola - nama batrisa - aksara ei tantra (C. Bh. Adi 14/146)

The above verse is called the mahamantra. It contains sixteen holy names of the Lord composed of thirty two syllables. Mahaprabhu further said to Misra: "sadhite sadhite yabe premankur habe sadhya - sadhana tatta janiba se tabe." (C. Bh. Adi 14/147)

This means if you continuously chant this mahamantra the seed of love of God will sprout in your heart. Then you will understand the goal of life and the process of achieving it. It is stated in one part of Caitanya Bhagvata as:-

apane sakale prabhu kahe upadese listen Krishna - nam in ecstacy sense

Hare Krishna Hare Krishna

Krishna Krishna Hare Hare

Hare Rama Hare Rama

Rama Rama Hare Hare

prabhu kahe - kahilam a mahamantra chant this name keeping nirbandha all achievements will be attained by all always tell this, there is no rule ki bhojane, ki shayane kiba jaga rane always think of Krishna all through day and night (C. Bh. Adilila).

The meaning of the above verses are:-

Mahaprabhu advised all to think of Krishna, chant His holy name always and if one can do this his all will be achieved.

It is stated in the Caitanya Caritamrita:-

"Kali kaler dharma - Krishna - Nam sankirtana Krishna - sakti Vina nahe tara pravartana". (C. C Antya Chapter 7 text 11)

This means in this sinful age of Kali congregational chanting of the Krishna nama is the only dharma. But this can't be introduced without the mercy of Krishna Himself. Vallava Bhatta (a famous Vaisnava Acarya) also said to Mahaprabhu:- "you have spread the sankirtana movement of Krishna consciousness. Therefore, it is evident that you have been empowered by Lord Krishna. There is no question about it."

(C. C Antalila chapter 7 text 15)

GLORIFICATION OF CHANTING THE HOLY NAME

A question may arise how to chant/japa Maha - mantra. In other words what is the method of chanting the holy name?. What is meant by offenseless chanting i.e, sreenam or pure nam, namabhas and nam - aparada?. We shall discuss all these in the way of glorification of chanting the holy name.

- (1) It is stated in all vedaic scriptures that if an all - known person blasphemes a vaisnava he will certainly fall down from the path of devotion. (C. Bh Madya Lila Text 390)
- (2) If one commits offenses against the holy names, he cannot even possibly attain namabhas (a glimpse of offenders chanting) or the fruits of chanting the holy names.
- (3) Continuous chanting of the holy names will surely uplift even a very mundane people. As for example, Haridas Thakura advised a prostitute a Laxahira as:-
nirantar nama Lao Kara tulasi sevana acirat pabe tabe Krsnera Carana (C. C Antya Chapter 2 text 137)

The English translation is:-

Krishna mantra japa continuously and give service to tulsi - maharani, by watering her, you will get every thing you like and so on.

- (4) Regarding the holy Rama Nama and Krishna Nama it has been stated in the Caitanya Caritamrita as follows:-

"The holy Krishna nama is more forceful than Rama nama."

"mukti - hetuka tarakahaya rama nama Krishna nama paraka hana Kare prem - dana"

(C. C Antya Lila 257)

This means the holy name of Lord Rama certainly give liberation, but the holy name of Krishna transports one to the other side of the ocean of sin.

- (5) If one chant the holy name with offenses, he will not get any good result rather namabhas is more fruitful not to speak of offenseless chanting of the holy name. Once, Caitanya Mahaprabhu asked Haridas Thakura that in this Kali - Yuga crores and crores of Yavanas(those who are engaged in cow killing, eating meat and do not respect the Brahmanas. Alternatively those who act against the principles of Vedas is called Yavanas). How these mundane people will purify their behaviour and becomes devotees of the Lord?. Haridas replied that all yavanas will get mukti by chanting ha rama ha rama bali which is called navanas.

"yavava - sakalera mukti - habe anayase ha rama, ha rama bali kahe namabhase."

(C. C. Antyalila text 53)

[Namabhas : Yadyapi anya sankate anya haya namabhasa tathapi namerateja na hayavinasa (C. C Antya text 55)

- (6) Even a mlecha (those who takes meat, fish etc) will be liberated by namabhasa, Haridas Thakur said to Gopala Cakravarti who was an arrogant and do not believe in Hari nama (C. C. Antya lila text 199). Haridas Thakur further said :- Why are you doubtful? The revealed scriptures say that anyone can attain liberation simply by a glimpse of offenseless chanting of Hari nama.
- (7) By continuous chanting of the holy name one can relief from the influence of mighty maya. This is revealed in Gita (9/24) by the Lord Himself. This is why the Lord advised His devotee.
- " trinadapi sunicana taror api sahisnuna amanina mandena Kirtaniyah sada harish (Shikastakam verse 3)
- (8) One cannot understand the glory of the holy name simply by logic and argument (C. C Antya text 206)
- (9) In this Kali Yuga pure/ chanting offenselessly the name of the Lord is very difficult. Thus, navabhas may be a great opportunity for the sinful persons. Haridas Thakura gives us such a gurantee as follows:-

" haridasakahen a - yadi nama bhase mukti naya tabe amara nakkatimu - ei suniscaya" (C. C Antya Chapter 3 Verse 199)

Here Haridas Thakura accepted the challenge offered by a so called brahman Gopal cakravarti. If by namabhasa liberation is not available he said certainly I shall cut my nose.

The meaning ha rama ha rama means abominable whereas the words ha rama are the spiritual summum, the fact is the same, whether they are uttered by yavanas or by great devotees just as fire is the same both for a child and for an elderly man. In other words, the holy name of the Lord ha rama always acts even when the holy names are chanted without references to the Supreme Lord. Yavanas utter the holy name in a different attitude than devotees, but the holy name ha - rama is so powerful spiritually that it acts anywhere, whether one know it or not. This is explained in this ways:-

"The chanting of the Lord's holy name to indicate something other than the Lord is an instance of nama bhasa". Even when the holy name is chanted in this way its transcendental power is not vanished.

(10) The word rama consists of the two syllables ra and ma. These are unseparated and are decorated with the loving word ha meaning 'O'. The letters of the holy name hare has so much spiritual potency that they act even when uttered improperly. (C. C. Antya Chapter 3 text 59)

(11) Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura states that the word vyavahita (improperly uttered) is not used here to refer to the mundane vibration of the letters of the alphabet. Such negligence utterance for the sense gratification of materialistic persons is not a vibrations of transcendental sound. Utterance of the holy name while one engage in sense gratification is an impediment on the path toward achieving ecstatic love for Krishna. On the other hand if one who is eager for devotional service utters the holy name even partially or improperly, the holy name which is identical with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, exhibits its spiritual potency because of the fact that person's offenders utterance. Thus, one is relieved from all unwanted practices and one gradually awakens his dormant love for Krishna.

(12) It is stated in the caitanya caritamrita : "If a devotee once utters holy names of the Lord, or if it penetrates his mind or enters his ears, which is the channel of aural reception, the holy name will certainly deliver him from material bondage whether vibrated properly or improperly with correct or incorrect grammar and properly joined or vibrated in separate parts. O! brahmana, the potency of the holy name for the benefit of the material mind and body, for material wealth and followers or under the influence of greed or atheism. In other words, if one utters the name with offences - such chanting will not produce the desired result very soon. Therefore, one should diligently avoid offenses in chanting the holy name of the Lord (C. C Antya Chapter 3 text 60)

(13) The following verse is taken from the Padma Purana which is included in the Hari Bhakti Vilas (11. 527) by Sanatana Gosvami who gives the following meanings :- "If one somehow or other hears, utters or remembers the holy name, or if it catches his mind while coming near his ears, that holy name, even if vibrated in separate words, will act.

(14) On the earth there are many living entities, some are mobile and some are immobile. What will be the fate of trees, plants, insects and other living entities?. How will they be delivered material Bondage?. A loudly chanting of mahamantra will benefit all these moving and non - moving entities. (C. C. Antya Chapter 3 text 70).

The moving entities who have heard the Lord's loud Sankirtana have already been delivered from bondage to the material world and after the non - moving living entities like trees, creepers etc hear the holy name in the form of a holy echo. However, it is not echo really, rather it is the Kirtan of the non - moving living entity. All this, although inconceivable is possible by Lord's mercy, When loud chanting of the Hare Krishna mahamantra is performed all over the world by those who follow Lord's footsteps, all living entities, moving and non - moving dance in ecstatic devotional love.

(15) According to the Pancharatra this mahamantra should be chanted both in Japa and loud Kirtana. For one who chants this mahamantra in loud Kirtana the seed of love of God sprouts very soon within his heart by the influences of that loud Kirtana and by the progressive mercy of the holy names. That Person soon become expert in the science of goal of life and the process for overlapping mellows.

Conclusion:-

Hare Krishna is now - a - days a household phrase in almost every cities, towns and villages throughout the world. The Krishna Consciousness began more than 500 years ago when Lord Caitanya, an hidden incarnation of Krishna flooded the subcontinent of India. How real love for Krishna can be attained by chanting the holy name Hare Krishna...has been prescribed as well as practiced by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. Let us all enjoy and preach the mahamantra and let all of us be happy. All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

Notes:- 1. TarakBrahma - there are two words Tarak and Brahma. The first one indicates the salvation from the mundane world. Although Brahma indicates the Joti of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but here it means the Lord Himself. Hence by Tarak brahma we should mean the one who can give relief/relieve from this material world.

2. Nirbandha - This word was used by Mahaprabhu for prescribing the minimum number of sixty - four mala japa. Whenever one completes 16 rounds of japa it is called a Granthi and 4 such granthis is called a nirbandha. Thus one nirbandha means 64 round of japas (more or less chanting of one lakh mantra).

I am grateful to my grandson Mr. Animesh Dey for typing such a large article. May god bless him.

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- (4) Have written several books e.g. Vaisnava Sampradya, Vaisnava Namdhari Apasampradya, Twelve Gopals and Chowshasti Mohanta, Sree Sree Radha Tattava, Sree Nrisimya Deva, Mahaprabhur Antardhan Lila (Disappearance) and Vaisnava Pradip (a book containing more than 2200 questions and answers on Sanatan Dharma especially on Vaisnava Dharma).
- (5) Have written 10 books on various branches of Economics for Hons and Master Degree Students (e.g. Micro and Macro Economics, International Trade, Econometrics, Industrial Economics, Agricultural Economics, Mathematical Economics, Eco. Development Planning and so on).
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